

Montana State Library Commission Policy

Distribution of State Documents to Depository Libraries

In 1967, the legislature established the State Publications Library Distribution Center. Since its inception, thousands of state documents have been distributed to libraries across Montana. Because of this program, citizens of our state have access to current and historical information regarding the actions of state government. One of the Montana State Library's goals is "Montana citizens have easy and accurate access to state information" and this program is a major component of ensuring that this happens. As part of this goal, the Montana State Library collects and catalogs documents produced by state agencies in the most efficient manner for statewide access.

1. Any legally established library in the state of Montana may be designated as a full or partial depository. Full depositories are libraries that elect to receive documents from all state agencies; partial depositories are libraries that receive documents from selected state agencies. State, academic or research libraries outside of Montana may be designated as depositories. Requests to become a depository library may not be honored on the basis of limited resources of state agencies in regard to publishing documents.
2. Any Montana library designated as a full or partial depository shall agree to the following conditions with the understanding that failure to comply with any one condition is sufficient ground for cancellation of the contract between the State Library and the participating library:
 - a. Provide space to house the publications with adequate provisions for expansion. State publications may be integrated with other collections or shelved separately depending on the policy of the receiving library.
 - b. Process and shelve all state documents in a timely fashion.
 - c. Provide a professionally trained librarian or specially trained staff to render satisfactory service without charge to patrons in the use of such publications.
 - d. Library rules shall assure that the documents are available for public use and circulate according to the circulation policy of the individual library, unless for some reason it becomes necessary to restrict use.
3. The library must agree to periodic inspections by the Collections Management Librarian to ensure compliance with the terms of the contract. Librarians may request an inspection if they feel one is necessary or helpful to their management of the state documents collection.
4. The State Library may enter into temporary or permanent exchange agreements with libraries in or outside the state of Montana, other than through the establishment of formal depository agreements. The terms of these agreements shall be negotiated to the particular requirements of the situation.
5. The State Library encourages the use and publishing of electronic documents. These can be accessed on our home page through the state documents on-line window. We also have links to state agencies and their respective home pages. As formats and electronic architecture evolve, the State Library will continue to assess, promote, and implement the best technologies available for state document preservation and distribution.